

Parenting the First Year

Month 12

How Baby Is Changing

Your baby is probably spending a lot of time mastering walking. She may be especially clingy now. Also separation anxiety may peak now, causing bedtime and child-care problems. Try to give her the extra attention she needs. It will help her become more independent.

Her desire to walk is so strong it may even interfere with eating and sleeping. Offer foods you know she likes along with some new tastes.

It may be hard for your baby to relax and go to sleep. She may rock or bounce in her crib (Take the wheels off if the crib moves.) A back rub or reading a book as part of a regular bedtime routine may help her relax so she can fall asleep.

Have you noticed your baby enjoys helping you, like bringing you things? She understands more than she is able to say.

Your child may be able to say a few words, but words stand for whole thoughts. This puzzles you. When baby says mama, does it mean Where's mama, I want mama, or Play with me, mama?

What's Ahead?

By the end of the first year, your baby has developed his own personality. He is a full-fledged member of your family. It's hard to imagine what life was like without him! In the months ahead, look forward to your child:

- Sleeping about 12 hours at night and being an early riser.
- Needing a longer nap on some days than others.
- Usually wanting attention when waking up.
- Having a varied appetite, especially while teething. Children grow more slowly after 12 months so they generally eat less.
- Having what is often called a language explosion. A one-year-old may speak two or three words. A 2-year-old may know 200 to 300 words.
- Touching his genitals. This is normal. Children explore all of their body parts.
- Starting to show independence without really knowing what he wants. You may hear "No!" and "Me do it" a lot.

Memories

Your baby and family have come a long way!

At birth your baby probably weighed between five and nine pounds. Now she has tripled that weight.

At birth she ate many times during the day and night. Now she eats meals like you, including a variety of solid foods. She can help feed herself!

At birth your baby could barely lift her heavy head off the mattress. Now she can sit, stand, stoop and maybe take a few steps.

At birth your baby couldn't reach for things she saw. Now she can pick up tiny objects with thumb and first finger, swap things from hand to hand and put one object inside another.

At birth your baby communicated only by crying. Now she smiles, laughs, frowns. She shows anger, fear, joy, curiosity and love, and she may even say a few words.



Your Baby Wants You To Know by the End of 12 Months

How I Grow

- I may walk, but I still prefer to crawl. It's faster!
- I may try to do other things while walking, like wave to you or pick up my favorite blanket.
- I climb up and down stairs if I get the chance.
- I try to dress and undress myself, but I'm not very good at it yet.
- I insist on feeding myself.

How I Talk

- I repeat a few words I know. It's good practice.
- I babble phrases that sound like short sentences.

How I Respond

- I am still afraid of strangers and unfamiliar places.
- I am very definite about my likes and dislikes.

How I Understand

- I may be able to solve a problem through trial and error.
- I follow simple one-step directions and understand many things you say to me.

How I Feel

- I'm starting to have a sense of humor, and I think some things are funny.
- I still don't like being apart from you. I feel relieved when you return.
- I feel and show love and affection to my favorite people and to my favorite things.

How You Can Help Me Learn

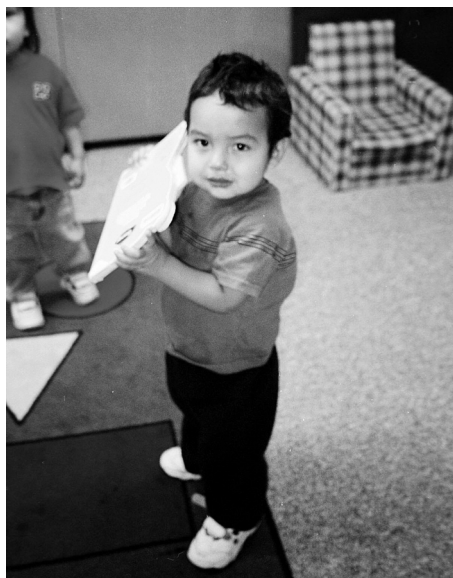
- Read to me and sing to me.
- Provide child-sized utensils and opportunities to feed myself.

He or She, Him or Her

These newsletters give equal time to both sexes. That's why we take turns referring to children as "he" or "she." Keep in mind that we are talking about all children when we use "he" or "she."

REMINDER: Your baby should have a health-care provider visit at 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, and annually after that.

Children are very different from each other. Don't worry if your child manages some skills earlier or later than other children. Most children tend to focus on one area, like physical or language development, and pay less attention to other areas. Get to know your unique baby and celebrate each new skill with him!



When To Learn To Use the Toilet

You have already made it through one year of diapers. Will your baby be ready to use the toilet soon? Probably not.

Child development research shows that the average child doesn't learn to use the toilet until age 2 1/2 to 3. Some take longer. Night-time control takes until age 3 to 4. Your child must be ready before he can start to learn toileting. There's no need to purchase a potty chair yet.

Learning to use the toilet is a complicated task. Your child must:

1. Understand what you want him to do.
2. Feel when he is about to urinate or have a bowel movement before he actually does it.
3. Be able to tell you in words that he needs to go.
4. Get into the bathroom.
5. Undo clothing, including snaps and zippers.
6. Sit on the toilet.
7. Relax and let the urine or bowel movement out.

If you try to toilet train too early, your child will be upset that he can't do what you want. You may become frustrated when things don't go smoothly.

You can avoid many problems by waiting until your child is ready, probably after his second birthday. Then toileting will go much more smoothly for both of you.

As your child begins to use the toilet, changes in his routine may upset his behavior and cause setbacks. A divorce, death, new baby in the family, move, hospitalization or similar experience may cause wetting to return. Be patient, and reassure your child.

Sex Roles

Do you think you would treat your child differently if he was a girl or she was a boy? Parents and other adults are more likely to snuggle with a girl and rough-house with a boy. They may get upset if a boy picks up a doll and plays with it because they think a doll is a girl's toy. The same thing may happen when a girl plays with a toy truck or car. Think about your attitudes toward sex roles. Now is a good time to look at the messages you are giving about "what little boys and little girls are made of." Are you sending a message that says the child is important to you no matter what sex the baby is, or are you sending mixed messages?

Here are some questions to help you sort out your attitudes:

- Do I hold back hugging my son just because he is a boy?
- Do I only purchase dolls for my daughter or make her feel girls can't do what boys do?
- Do I only purchase trucks for my son or make him feel he must be tough?

Your child will live in a world that is much different from the one you grew up in, so you need to think about the messages you are sending without even realizing it. Every child is a special person, regardless of whether male or female.

Baby Needs To Suck

You may think now that your little one is 12 months old she doesn't need to suck a pacifier or thumb any more. Not so!

A study of 12-month-olds found that when their moms left them with a pacifier in a room full of toys, they stayed longer, explored more and played with more toys than children without pacifiers.

Sucking a pacifier or a thumb will not hurt a child's teeth if it stops before permanent teeth start to come in. Vigorous and continuous thumbsucking past the age of four can create problems with normal dental development.

Why do children like to suck? It is calming, and it helps them relieve stress.



Learning Abstract Ideas

How does a child learn ideas, like up and down, big and small, shapes, colors, time and numbers? With your help! Much of this learning takes place in the home. Parents are important teachers.

In your baby's first two years, playing introduces her to basic ideas like texture, size, sound, taste, shape, color, smell and temperature. With these basic ideas, she can sort out the world into things that are similar and different.

Children learn best with the encouragement of a caring adult who shows interest in what they do, talks to them about it and plays with them. New and different things for your baby to play with help the learning process.

Here are some ideas to help your baby learn about:

Size

- Different-sized containers — plastic bowls, boxes, measuring spoons.
- Your shoe and the baby's shoe.
- Large boxes or laundry baskets to crawl into.

Shapes

- Finger foods, such as cheese cubes, small banana or melon pieces, sandwich squares, cooked noodles, crackers, dry cereal. Watch your baby closely so she doesn't put small food items into places other than her mouth (nose, etc.).
- Shape-sorter toys. Buy or make one.
- Household items to match up circle to circle, box to box.

Sounds

- Pot lids to clash as cymbals, wooden spoons to bang a box drum.
- Containers with a variety of objects inside: corn, rice or cotton, for example. A clean yogurt container with its lid taped on tight makes a great "shaker."

Volume and Amounts

- Play dump-and-fill games. Use water in the bath or sand in the sandbox.
- Drink from different-sized cups.

Prevent Childhood Poisoning

Your child likes to put things in his mouth to taste them. Even if they taste bad, he may eat poisons, like mothballs or drain cleaner. Only as he gets older will he learn that bad-tasting things may be harmful. It's your responsibility to protect your child from poisons in your home. For information visit www.aopcc.org.

Think Ahead to Prevent Poisoning

- Store poisonous products in a locked cabinet or high out of children's sight and reach. Put them back immediately after use.
- Never put a poison in food or drink containers. Someone may think it is food and eat it.
- Don't take medicine in front of your children. Never tell them that medicine is candy.
- Watch out. Other people's homes may not be childproof.
- Keep the North Dakota Poison Control Center phone number at every phone in the house. The number is 800.222.1222.

The most common treatment for poisoning is activated charcoal. You may want to keep this in your home, but **DO NOT** give it to your child without contacting the Poison Control Center or health-care provider for instructions for treatment.

Here is a room-by-room list of common household products that are poisonous:

Kitchen:	Dishwasher soap, oven cleaner, floor and furniture polish, ammonia, Iye, bleaches, detergent.
Bathroom:	Medicines: prescription and non-prescription drugs - such as aspirin, Tylenol, or vitamins; cosmetics; drain cleaner; treated or colored toilet water; disinfectants; perfume; rubbing alcohol.
Laundry:	Bleaches, detergents.
Storeroom or Garage:	Kerosene, lighter fluid, gasoline, paint, paint thinner, turpentine, weed killer, pesticides, rat poison, fertilizer, antifreeze.
Bedroom:	Perfumes and colognes, sleeping medications.
Other:	Houseplants, tobacco, any alcohol, mothballs, paint chips.

If Poisoning Occurs:

1. Try to figure out what was swallowed. Keep the containers. If the child vomits, save the vomit and take it to the hospital with you for chemical analysis.
2. If the child is unconscious, call 9.1.1 or the emergency medical number. Begin CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) if the child is not breathing or does not have a pulse.
3. If the child is awake, call the Poison Control Center or local health provider right away. Even if the child seems OK, treatment may be needed. Time is very important.
4. NEVER induce vomiting unless recommended by the Poison Control Center or a health-care provider.
5. Seek medical attention. Call the Poison Control Center or a health care provider before starting first aid. The most frequently used medication for poisoning to have on hand is activated charcoal.



Pesticides and Child Safety

Pesticides can be dangerous if used carelessly, or if they are not stored properly. Store out of children's reach in a locked cabinet or garden shed. Read labels and follow directions exactly.

Before applying pesticides, remove children and their toys and keep them away until the pesticide has dried or as long as recommended by the label. If your use of a pesticide is interrupted, reclose the package and place out of reach of children.

Never transfer pesticides to other containers that children may associate with food or drink. Never place rodent or insect bait where small children can get to them.

Reminder:

The most common treatment for poisoning is activated charcoal. You may want to keep this in your home, but **DO NOT** give it to your child without contacting the Poison Control Center at 800.222.1222 or your health-care provider for instructions for treatment.

Healthy Teeth

If you haven't already done so, give your child her own toothbrush. You will need to do most of the brushing until she develops the necessary skills. Use a small, soft bristled toothbrush with very little or no toothpaste. Often the flavor or foaming of toothpaste can irritate a baby. However, if she likes the toothpaste, use less than a pea-sized amount. Too much fluoride may discolor permanent teeth.

The American Dental Association recommends that your child's first dental visit be between six and 12 months of age. During the first visit, the dentist will examine your child's teeth and gums, checking to see if growth and development is normal and to find any tooth decay.

Staying on the bottle too long can cause tooth decay, poor appetite, ear infections, low iron levels and too much weight gain. At one year, most toddlers who are drinking well from a cup are ready to give up their bottles. Toddlers are usually off their bottle by 12-14 months and should be off by 18 months.

Start weaning by offering the cup more often and putting less milk in the bottle each day. Help bottles to disappear. A bedtime bottle is the hardest to give up. Start a new bedtime routine, read a story or take a bath.

How Much Should Baby Eat?

As your baby gets older he will begin to eat more table food and parents begin to worry if he is getting enough of the right kinds of foods. These are common concerns. Following are guidelines to help you with this common concern.

- As a parent you should decide what foods to fix for your child. It is up to you to choose a variety of healthy foods. As your child masters table foods, you will want to prepare the same nutritious foods for your child as you do for yourself.
- Parents determine when meals and snacks are offered. Young children like routine. Have regular meal and snack times, but be flexible on those special days.
- Parents determine where meals and snacks are offered. Meals and snacks are best eaten at the table. Make it a family habit to have at least one meal a day together.
- Let your child decide how much to eat. You should offer a variety of foods and then let your child decide if or how much he will eat. Don't comment on how much your child is eating, be it too much or too little. Of all the guidelines this is the most important.

Children grow at different rates and your child will eat more when he is growing and he will eat less when his growth has slowed down. We often see a 1-year-old eating more than a 2-year-old, simply because the 1-year-old is growing at a faster rate.

Children know just how much to eat. They eat when they are hungry and stop when they are not. They will lose that ability if you encourage them to eat more food or your restrict food. Your child is the best judge of how much to eat.

Expose children to a variety of foods. Offer new foods with favorite foods. Children often have to eat a food 11-18 times before they learn to like it.



Why Most Children Bite

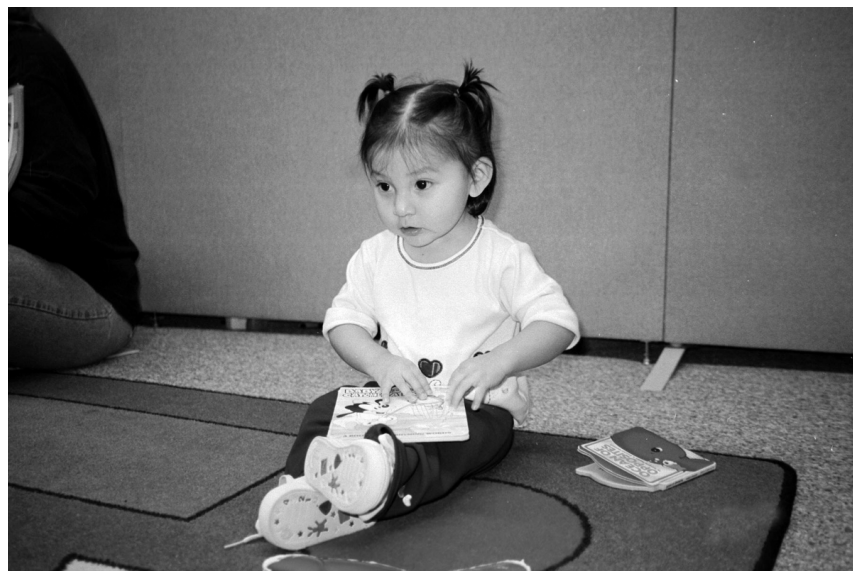
Some of the most common reasons children bite are:

- They want what they want now!
- Not enough space to themselves or too many people around.
- Not able to ask for what they need.
- Frustrated or angry (children differ in temperament, some react more intensely than others).
- Teething and just need to bite to relieve the pressure.
- Not enough toys or materials to keep their interest.
- Feeling like they are not getting enough attention.

How To Help

- Keep an eye on the child's behavior to see what may be causing him to bite. Is there a time of day, a favorite toy or a cause of stress that seems common when he bites?
- Care for the one bitten first. Wash and ice the area, if necessary, but mostly offer comfort. Tell the child who has bitten, "No biting is allowed. Biting hurts." The biter needs to learn that he has hurt someone and cannot do it again.
- Give the child something else to bite — a biter biscuit, the child's own teething ring or a clean, cool washcloth. Sometimes children bite to relieve pressure with teething, — not to hurt someone.
- Help teach the child how to take turns.
- If a child is about to bite, quickly remind him to use his voice and teach him words to say what he wants.

Biters need extra patience and positive attention to get through this time. Remember this is a normal stage of your child's growing years.



Another Baby? Well, Maybe ...

Every pregnancy is important! A study conducted in North Dakota indicated women sometimes did not go in for early prenatal care because they already had a baby and didn't think it was needed. If you decide to have another baby, plan ahead. Health-care providers call this pre-conceptual planning. The most important time for your future baby is early in the pregnancy before most women even know they're pregnant. Take care of yourself before you become pregnant again.

Some things to consider are:

- Eat well-balanced meals.
- Talk to your doctor or dietician about the importance of folic acid in your diet.
- Get regular exercise.
- Avoid substances that could be harmful (tobacco, alcohol or other drugs).
- Avoid harmful chemicals at work or home (including lead paint, oven cleaners, bug killers and gasoline).
- Make sure your immunizations are up-to-date, especially rubella (German measles) and tetanus.
- Treat any other medical condition before becoming pregnant, such as diabetes, high blood pressure or sexually transmitted diseases.
- See your health-care provider early in your pregnancy.
- Don't empty a cat's litter box during pregnancy.

Healthy lifestyle choices before pregnancy can increase the chances of having a healthy baby.



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Help Is Out There

Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota

Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota (PCAND) is a statewide, non-profit organization whose mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect before it occurs through education, public awareness, collaboration and advocacy.

PCAND can provide parents with free parenting education materials on topics such as stress management, parent-child bonding, child development, discipline, choosing child care providers and positive parenting.

Call PCAND at 800.403.9932 to request publications and for further information.

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